

STACK
ANNEX

5

057

881

A
0000317784
UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY

HAUSA SPELLING

R. M. EAST

3_D

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY GASKIYA CORPORATION, ZARIA

Hausa Spelling

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

For the spelling all single words Bargery's Dictionary is followed, except where otherwise stated in this pamphlet.

2. Where two alternative spellings are given in the Dictionary the first is usually chosen, except where it conflicts with a rule given below ; e.g. **kullum**, **duhu**, **zarafi**.

3. The Kano dialect is used in all cases; except (a) when a word is peculiar to Kano city, and there is another word in existence which has a wide distribution, e.g. **sa'ad da**, not 'san da';

(b) where the Kano terminations lead to ambiguity or increase difficulty of reading, e.g. **idon**, not 'idān' (from **ido**) ; **taimakon**, not 'taimakwan.'

DIVISION OF WORDS

4. All words which have an independent meaning in the context where they are being used are written separately ; e.g. **abin da**, **lokacin da**, **farin ciki**, **mata tasa**, **masu ba da gaskiya**.

[NOTE : These words were joined in older texts on the false analogy of English (*what*, *when*, *happiness*), or perhaps in some cases

because they are joined in Ajami.]

5. Compound expressions, of which one part has an independent meaning but the other is only used in connection with it, are also written as two words ; e.g. **war haka**, **ja wur**, **a kalla**.

[In these cases the part which has no independent meaning in modern speech is often a survival or corruption of a form which was once used; e.g. **sabo da** (for **sabili**, from Arabic), **Allah ya ji kan rai**, **gare shi** (probably same word as **gari**, **gu**, **guri**, **wuri**) ; cf. English “kith and kin” (*kith* is obsolete except in this phrase.)]

6. Exceptions to the above rule are a few cases where two words have become so closely related as to form one idea ; e.g. **ḡanuwa**, **ubangiji**, **uwargida**, **watakila**.

[NOTE (i) that **ḡanuwa** represents a single idea, and that its parts have lost their independent meaning, is shown by the fact that it takes **n** and not **r** before its possessive ; i.e. **ḡanuwan** not ‘**ḡan uwar**’ (cf. **abokin gabarsa**.)]

(ii) **mai gida** is spelt as two words if it means, literally, “the owner of the house”; but if it means “master” it is spelt as one : **maigidana ya zo**.

(iii) **hakanan** is written as one word, because it is taken merely as a lengthened form of **haka**.

7. Pronouns and adjectives having the prefix **ko** are spelt as separate words ; e.g. **ko wane** (adj), **ko wanne** (pronoun), **ko wane ne**, **ko mene ne**, **ko yausha**, **ko ina**. Exceptions are **kowa** and **kome**, meaning everyone and everything.

8. The simple subjective and objective pronouns in the aorist tense are written separately and should never be joined to the verb : **na buge shi, ya kira mu.**

9. The forms **ina, kana, yana, etc.** and **aka, muka, kika, etc.** are written as one word. [NOTE (i) *not* 'nna,' 'yina,' as in Dictionary.

(ii) when writing **sakkwatanci**, the forms **na** (for **ne**), **ta** (for **ce**), **ka** (for **ke**) are written separately.]

10. The forms **na ke, ka ke, ya ke, and na kan, ka kan, ya kan, mu kan, etc.** are divided.

[NOTE (i) *not* 'ni ke' (Zaria, etc.).

(ii) **shi** is never used as the subject ; e.g. *not* 'shina' (=yana), 'abin da shi ke so' (=ya ke), 'gaya mashi shi tafi' (=gaya masa ya tafi.)]

11. Possessive pronouns (except those compounded with **na** and **ta**) are treated as suffixes ; e.g. **sarkina, matata, dokinsa, etc.** This also applies when they are joined to verbal nouns in an objective sense ; e.g. **ana kiranka, muna sonta.**

[NOTE : a common mistake is to join the words **gan su, san ta, etc.** The **su** and **ta** are here, of course, objective pronouns, the verbal noun forms being **ganinsu, saninta, etc.**]

12. The following are the forms used for pronouns compounded with **ma** : **mini, maka, miki, masa, mata, mana, muku, musu.**

(N.B.—Before a noun **wa** is used, *not* **ma**.)

ARABIC PHRASES

13. The rule is to divide the words so as to

make them easy to read, rather than to follow strictly the Arabic grammar or calligraphy. Words compounded with **-llahi** should not be divided before the double **ll**, but may be divided before the preposition, if any.

E.g. **a'uzu billahi, wa iyazu billahi, alhamdu lillahi, subhana lillahi**; but **fi sabilillahi, subhanallahi**. So also before other double consonants, e.g. **sabilinnasi**.

14. Where the second part of the phrase starts with the article, and the alif is elided, the **l** can be attached, in writing Hausa, to the word before, in spite of the grammar, if otherwise the word would be too unwieldy ; e.g. **Daral gururi, kaba'irul Shaidan**. But short common phrases it is best to write as one word, e.g. **fil'azal, baitulmal**.

15. The apostrophe is not used to divide words, even though there is a glottal break in Hausa ; e.g. **ba a samu ba** (not **ba'a**, except in the noun).

HYPHENS

16. Hyphens are used :

(a) in reduplications (plurals, colours, etc); e.g. **manya-manya, yawace-yawace, fari-fari, mai kamar albasa-albasa**.

But where the sense is "distributive", the hyphen is not used ; e.g. **ya raba musu uku uku, muka bi titi titi, suka rika zuwa kungiya kungiya**.

Excep that "**kasa kasa**", even when used as true plural of **kasa**, i.e. not distributive, is not hyphenated, to avoid confusion with **kasa-kasa**

(=downwards, earth-coloured, etc.).

(b) in compound names ; e.g. **Son-Allah, Na-Musa, Mai-kan-falele, Garba-ba-ka-zuwa-Jere.**

Hyphens are not now used after **mai, masu, na** (when not in names), nor after **a, da**, etc.; e.g. **na fari, a jere, da yawa.** [*But nagari* is written as one word.]

17. Compounds with the prefix **ba** are written as one word ; e.g. **Bahaushe, Basakkwace, baƙauye.**

M BEFORE LABIALS

18. (i) Inside a word, **m** (not **n**) is always written before a labial (**b, ɓ, f, or m**) ; e.g. **amfani** (*not* 'anfani').

(ii) Accordingly, final **n** changes to **m** before the suffixed possessive pronoun **-mu** ; e.g. **sarkimmu, gidammu, taimakommu.**

[NOTE : this rule applies only to final **n**, not to final **r** ; e.g. **ƙasarmu**, not 'ƙasammu'. Thus **matammu**, our wives ; **matarmu**, our wife.]

(iii) But final **n** does not change before a labial at the beginning of another word; e.g. **gidan madakin Bauci** (*not* 'gidam madakim Bauci').

(iv) *Except* only in the case of the words **an, in, zan, ɗan** and '**yan**'. These change to **m** before another word beginning with a labial ; e.g. **am ba ni, im Musa ya zo, ɗam fari.** (*N.B. but not* 'mai bam mamaki,' or 'sum ba shi').

19. Final **m** is written in preference to **n**—**dabam, kullum, malam, kwaram.**

CHANGE OF FINAL CONSONANTS BEFORE 'DA'

20. In the causal form of the verb, when followed by **da**, the final **r** or **s** becomes **d** ; e.g. **zubad da**, **fitad da** (or **fid da**), **wahalad da**. [When the form is used without **da**, it ends in **r** (Kano) ; e.g. **ya sayar**. So also the form **sayarwa** not 'sayaswa'.]

But feminine *nouns* do *not* change their final **r** before **da** ; e.g. **kayanwar da na gani**. [*Except* the noun **sa'a** used as conjunction, **sa'ad da**.]

KW-, KY-ETC.

21. In the syllables **kwo**, **kwo**, the **w** is dropped, being merely part of the phoneme; **ko-yi**, **kofi**. In the syllables **kye** and **kyi** the **y** is dropped for the same reason : **kememe**, **keya**, **kifta**. Before other vowels the **y** must be retained if it is pronounced.

INITIAL CAPITALS

22. The rule for initial capitals is roughly the same as in English. The following, however, are not spelt with initial capitals in Hausa :

- (i) Languages, e.g. **turanci**, **hausa** ;
- (ii) Institutions, e.g. **baitulmal**, **gwamnati**, **gidan kutare** ;
- (iii) Offices and their holders, e.g. **razdan**, **madaki**, **dan'iya**. [*Except* the Kanuri title **Mai**, which has to be so spelled to avoid confusion].
- (iv) For rules governing titles coupled with names, see the pamphlet **HANYAR RUBUTA HAUSA**.

PUNCTUATION

1. The points are the same as in English, except that the semi-colon is not used.

2. As the average rate of reading is at present slower than in English, it is better to over-rather than under-punctuate, especially in long sentences.

3. Generally speaking, it is preferable to punctuate a sentence according to the sense rather than in the way it is often read ; e.g. **abin da na fi so, shi ne . . not**, 'abin da na fi so shi ne, . . ', **ya yi musu gargadi, cewa kada su . . . not**, 'ya yi masu gargadi cewa, kada su. . . '

4. Where, as often in African languages, a sentence is made up of co-ordinate phrases, a comma is not necessary after each one, if the action is closely related ; e.g. **Ya kama doki ya hau. Ya shiga daki, ya dauki rigar mai gida ya sa, ya fito, ya kama hanya yana murmushi.** But, **Ya kama hanya, yana murmushi ya ci ribar kafa**, is best punctuated thus, as the last phrase is dependent on **murmushi**.

5. The rule for introducing reported speech is the same as in English, i.e. with a comma after **ya ce** or **cewa**.

6. The comma after **ce** is omitted if the sentence has more than one piece of reported speech in it ; e.g. **In ta ce "Ku shigo", ku ce mata "A'a, an ce kada mu tsaya."**

7. Subordinate sentences of all kinds are normally divided by commas : **In ya zo, ka yi masa maraba. Na yi wa gidana kyaure, don kada wani ya sake rabowa.**

8. But if the word **sai** is used in a short sentence the comma may be omitted : **Bai zame ba sai fada. Da gamawa sai ya tashi.**

9. The use of two commas to separate off a phrase from the main sentence is as in English : **Wata sa'a bakwai, har goma ma, zuwa su ke.** (A common mistake is to omit one comma.)

10. Vocatives are isolated by commas: **A nan ma, in ka lura, malam, sai ka ga..** It is simpler to make no exceptions, even when there is no pause whatever in speaking : **Haba, danuwana, bari mu... Hakuri dai, zaki.**

11. **To** is always followed by a punctuation mark, even in phrases like **Toi madalla!** unless coupled with a particle (**fa mana**, etc.), in which case the punctuation follows the particle. Similarly for all other ejaculatory particles, **anya, ha, ho, kash, assa**, etc. [NOTE: The particles **ai** and **ashe** are sometimes ejaculatory, but more often are part of the syntax, in which case they are not, of course, punctuated.]

12. **Kai** is followed by a comma or exclamation mark when it is used as an interjection, but not when used as a pronoun : **Kai, ban yar-da ba!** But : **Kai bakon nan, ka zo ka taimake mu.**

13. **A'a!** is the exclamation of surprise (high tones). If not written with an exclamation mark, but followed by a comma or full-stop, it means "No" (falling tones).

N.B. Further explanations and examples are given in the Hausa version of this pamphlet 'HANYAR RUBUTA HAUSA.'

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A 000 031 778 4

G.C. 4798/10/53/2000